



# COMMISSION COMMENTS

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## Civil Service Reform 2003: New Layoff Proposal for Non-bargaining Unit Employees

From 1993 to 1998, the Civil Service Commission was involved in a substantial civil service reform effort. However, one area that remained untouched by these changes was employee separations. For the most part, the vast majority of the City's employees are covered by collective bargaining agreements. The manner in which these employees can be laid off is controlled by union contract. There is a small portion of the City workforce, less than 10%, which is not covered by labor agreements. While some of these employees are unclassified, many are classified employees subject to the Rules of the Civil Service Commission, both for purposes of hiring and separations.

The Civil Service Commission is considering a proposal to change the layoff rule for those employees not covered by a bargaining unit agreement. The proposed Rule would not require the appointing authority to layoff employees based only upon seniority. Rather, other relevant factors such as job function or performance could be taken into

consideration. The proposal would not modify the employees' recall rights. So if a position is to be filled during the recall period, the laid off employee would be returned to work as is presently the case.

A copy of the proposed Rule revision will be posted on the Commission's website. In addition, brief informational sessions will be held to distribute copies and answer questions for interested employees. These sessions will be held as follows:

Thursday, August 28, 2003, 2:30 p.m.  
Civil Service Commission Hearing Room,  
50 West Gay Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

Friday, August 29, 2003, 9:30 a.m.  
Health Department Auditorium  
240 Parsons Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

If you plan to attend either session, please contact Cricket Davis at extension 5-8303 so we can ensure appropriate space and materials are available.

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### Special points of interest:

- Police & Fire Promotional Testing
- Civil Service: What we do and What we *don't* do
- Clerical Classification Project
- Still testing!

## DID YOU KNOW.....

- In 2002, the Commission administered tests for 91 competitive job classes, including 12 promotional examinations
- Over 10,000 applications for City jobs were received by the Commission in 2002

## Clerical Classification Project

The Commission recently undertook a large project to study and revise some of the classifications in the office and administrative support job family. The original study included 21 classifications. A total of 342 employees in these classes participated by filling out a questionnaire, attending an information session or both. Thank you to all of you who have participated in this project. Your assistance helps us gather the most accurate information.

All of the data gathered from City employees was reviewed and analyzed. In addition, the analysts assigned to this project researched other jurisdictions to see how they structured their job titles. Several issues were identified with the City's current structure. The job classes included a variety of very broad and very narrow job classes. There was also no identifiable career path for employees. Another problem was that employees who gained experience or training outside of the scope of their job duties could not necessarily use this experience to qualify for other City jobs.

As a result of this process, some of the original 21 classes were removed from the group. The Commission

is recommending the consolidation of the remaining job classes into fewer titles that will be broader and will require increasing amounts of related experience as an employee moves up in the job series.

There are many benefits of consolidating these classes. These changes will provide a career path for future growth, and experience in a lower class will qualify employees for a higher class. Employees will be less likely to be "boxed in" their current job class. The changes also mean that employees will have to take fewer tests in order to move up or transfer to a similar class. Another benefit to a broader structure with fewer titles is that positions will be less likely to be misclassified and there will be less duplication and overlap of duties among the job classes.

The project team will be inviting employees in the job classes in the study to attend a feedback session. This will provide more specifics about the proposed changes and allow for comments from employees. These sessions will occur at the end of August and employees in the affected classes will be notified of dates and times.

## Meet commission employee...Barb Hutton!

Barb Hutton is an Administrative Assistant with the Civil Service Commission who works in our Beacon Building Testing Center. Some of her duties include administering non-uniformed tests, assisting with grading, and answering customers' questions about testing procedures. Barb also handles the Commission's records retention process and works on the annual report.



years, Barb has seen many changes here at the Commission. One of her earlier positions involved doing the typing for the testing unit, which was all done on an IBM Selectric typewriter. Barb enjoys the variety her job offers her and the many nice people she has met over the years.

Barb was born and raised in the Columbus area. She has a daughter, Tiffany, and a 4-year old granddaughter named Alyssa.

Since she has worked for the City of Columbus for 28

## Don't be surprised to see us testing

The City of Columbus must continue to provide the level of service citizens have come to expect, even with the current budget constraints. Each department has had to make adjustments, and will continue to adjust as needed to accommodate the budget.

Civil Service must continue to maintain eligible lists so that when a department has a vacancy, there is a list available from which to hire. When the test is administered, there may not be an immediate vacancy,

but Civil Service will maintain the list, normally for a period of two years. As with any other organization, the City experiences turnover, and some departments will need to fill positions regardless of the budget situation. Therefore, continue to check the website at [www.csc.columbus.gov](http://www.csc.columbus.gov), call the job-line at (614) 645-7667, call our employment consultant at (614) 645-7708, and visit us at 50 West Gay Street, 6<sup>th</sup> floor.

# Civil Service Commission Overview

Many City of Columbus employees and applicants only have contact with the Civil Service Commission when initially applying for jobs. However, the Commission has a variety of functions in addition to accepting applications for employment. The City Charter assigns certain responsibilities to the Commission in several areas.

## What we do...

**Classification:** The Commission maintains the City's class plan which provides the framework for hiring and work assignments within the City. The Commission is responsible for creating, revising and abolishing job classifications. Job classes are reviewed on a regular basis, every five years, because the needs of City agencies as well as technology change. All changes to job classifications must be approved by the Civil Service Commission at their regular monthly meetings.

**Applicant Testing:** The City Charter specifies that the Commission test for jobs in the classified service. The Commission staff develop and administer exams which are designed to measure the important knowledge, skills and abilities needed to perform City jobs. Civil Service tests can be in various formats including written, performance, training and experience, oral, or other types of exams depending on the nature of the job. The Commission then establishes lists of eligible candidates for a job class based on the exam results.

**Hiring:** The Commission also handles applications for City jobs. This involves preparing and posting job openings and exam announcements, accepting applications and reviewing applicants' qualifications. When vacancies occur, the Commission staff certify names of eligible individuals to City agencies for hiring. Employee personnel files are also maintained by the Commission.

**Payroll/Personnel Actions:** Another responsibility given to the Commission by the City Charter is payroll verification. No employee can be paid until the Commission certifies that the employee was hired and is still employed in accordance with the Charter and Commission Rules.

**Appeals/Hearings:** The Commission is made up of three Commissioners who are appointed by the mayor. In addition to the classification review and approval noted earlier, the Commissioners are also responsible for ruling on appeals filed by applicants and employees, ruling on administrative reviews of applicants removed for background reasons, and conducting disciplinary appeal hearings.

**Columbus Public Schools:** The Commission also oversees the classified employees of the Columbus Board of Education, pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code. This includes classification actions, appeals, and disciplinary hearings.

## What We Don't Do...

The Commission is not responsible for compensation, labor relations, benefits, or training. These areas are handled by the Human Resources Department. As for hiring, while the Commission is responsible for job postings and evaluation of applicants' qualifications, the actual hiring decisions are made by each individual department.

Many people also confuse us with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission. The OCRC is actually a State of Ohio agency that provides education and enforcement of Ohio's laws against discrimination. For more information about the Civil Service Commission, view our website at [www.csc.columbus.gov](http://www.csc.columbus.gov), or call our employment consultant at (614) 645-7708.

# Police and Fire Promotional Testing

Uniformed promotional examinations are developed by Columbus Civil Service Commission staff in cooperation with subject matter experts from the Columbus Divisions of Police and Fire. The testing process is very competitive. There are several ranks within Police and Fire that fall under uniformed promotional testing. Within the Division of Police they are: Sergeant, Lieutenant, Commander and Deputy Chief. Within the Division of Fire they are: Lieutenant, Captain, Battalion Chief, and Deputy Chief. For Civil Service staff, testing for Police and Fire is a continuous process, with unique examinations for each rank and new examinations

developed for each administration.

Before an examination can be developed or administered it is crucial that the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other areas that are critical to successful performance on the job are identified. A job analysis is utilized for this process. In order to complete the job analysis, current employees in the job classification and their supervisors may complete surveys, be interviewed, and/or be asked to have a Civil Service Personnel Analyst observe them while performing their job duties.

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## Civil Service Commission

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Commission Comments brought to you  
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**"Imagination is more important than knowledge." - Albert Einstein**

## Police and Fire Promotional Testing

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Other methods of gathering information about the job may be employed as well. The results of the information gathered are then compiled and analyzed before the development of the examination begins.

The examination is designed to cover the aspects of the job that were found to be important based on the job analysis results. In order to cover as many of these areas as possible, different types of examinations are developed. Most of the uniformed promotional exams with the City consist of four phases. The four phases may vary somewhat depending on the particular job class, but basically may consist of: multiple-choice (open and/or closed book), written work sample, tactical, and oral exams.

The next step in the process is test development, which is a crucial step in the testing process. It is in development that efforts are made to ensure that exam contents are accurate and that the exam covers the targeted knowledge, skills, abilities and other areas that were found to be important to the job.

In the development process, Civil Service staff utilizes subject matter experts (SMEs) who are familiar with the job, either employees in the job class or their supervisors. These SMEs help formulate exam questions, scenarios, answer keys and ensure that all parts of the examinations are technically correct and accurate for each of the phases. The multiple choice phase of the examination process normally consists of

questions derived from reading sources used on the job. In some cases textbooks that relate to the job are used in addition to the Division reading sources. In the case of written work sample exams, test-takers may be presented with a scenario and asked to complete the appropriate Division forms or write reports that are normally required on the job. For tactical exams test-takers are usually presented with an emergency situation and asked to respond either verbally or in writing as if they were actually at the scene. In the oral exam, situations are presented to those taking the test and they are asked to orally respond to the situation. There is usually a specified time limit and the exam may be in the format of a structured interview or a role-play exercise. In the structured interview, test takers are asked to answer questions that are given at the test site. In the role-play, test takers are asked to assume the role of an individual in the situation presented. Assessors are pulled from police and fire agencies from outside the State of Ohio; they play the role(s) of others during the exam, ask questions, and grade the candidates.

After all phases of the examination process are completed and scored, an eligible list is established. Unlike for most tests, banding is not used in uniformed promotional testing. Rather, the Rule of Three is utilized. With each promotion only the current top three individuals on the eligible list may be considered. This makes the examination process very competitive and all aspects of each exam critical.